INSIDE: PETROK'S BACK AS THE IRON SNAKES GO TO WAR!

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WARHAMMER® MONTHLY

DARKBLADE
The Last Battle!

plus TITAN • MORDHEIM • STRATEGIUM

WARHAMMER MONTHLY

BY KHORNE! *There you ore, Boneblode. I thought I'd find you quivering in some hole somewhere.*

EMPEROR'S THRONE, be quiet! You ignorant dog, I'm playing Strategium. I'm just about to decide upon a crucial move.

PLAYING WITH YOURSELF *ogoin, Boneblode? Tell you whot, let me ploy os your opponent. The forces of Choos will soon destroy your cursed Emperor's lockeys!*

OH, VERY WELL. You may play the Ebon pieces. But are you sure your limited intellect can handle the intricacies of Strategium, its thrice-fold circles and tactical gambits? For see, by enveloping your Knight-Errant, my Charger flanks the Tower of your second circle. It will take a sharp ploy indeed to escape this deadly trap, Chaos scum.

HMM, TRICKY... *Whot to do... whot to do... Now then, Boneblode, whot's this lorge pointy piece colled?*

THAT, VILE FIEND, is the most glorious marker of all, the Emperor piece, of course... Why?

LOOK CLOSELY, *Spoce Morine scum,ond you will see my tocticol genius? CHARGE! BLOOD FOR THE BLOOD GOD! STAB! STAB!*

OW! THAT'S MY EYE! That's not how you play Strategium moron! *OUCH!* Stabbing me in the head with the Emperor piece isn't a legal move, you cretin! You treacherous filth, where's my bolter? Ah, here we are...

DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!!

FLANK THAT, you cowardly cur! By the Emperor, this is a real strategy!

DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!!
DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!!
DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!! DAKKA!

NEXT ISSUE: **A Nice Quiet Day for Kal...**

Inside this comic...

TITAN

On the front line of war-world Vivaporius, Princeps Hekate and the crew of Imperius Dictatio are faced with an enigmatic yet deadly enemy.

MORDHEIM

Mercenaries Ulli and Marquand find themselves trapped by hideous, mutated rat-like snipers, as they explore Mordheim – City of the Damned.

STRATEGIUM

On the battlefields of Kapalia, Librarian Petrok learns that his instincts alone will not be enough to protect him from the sinister Eldar.

DARKBLADE

Could victory at last be within Malus's reach as he faces Tz'arkan – in the final climactic episode of Darkblade?

GAMES WORKSHOP

A BLACK LIBRARY PUBLICATION

EDITORS Marc Gascoigne & Andy Jones
PRODUCTION Darius Hinks & Gareth Harvey
COVER *Darkblade* by Mark Sasso

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SOMEWHERE IN THE WARP

☠ LETTERS FOR THE LETTERS GOD! ☠

• Gutspew? Gutspew! Stop snivelling in the corner and come here. What am I to do with you? With all the powers of Dark and Chaos, you still let that Space Marine best you time and time again. Obviously you need a lesson on inflicting pain, and though there are millennia between us the warp may prove useful yet. Perhaps you would enjoy the company of some of my delightful witches who will initiate you into the mind-wrenching, body-ripping rites decreed by our god, Khaine. Speaking of which, I think it is high time that Darkblade was to enjoy their company. He has had it easy thus far. Perhaps you could raise this matter with the masters of the dark tomes which you inhabit. The scribes do magnificent work but where is that creature Ephrael Stern? She who opposes the dark forces that we love, a return is long overdue. The scribes have written that an effigy is to be made, when? When? I must get my hands on her diminutive form. Answer Gutspew, do not fail me, or my Witch Champion Nismat will be caressing you with her blades. I await the tortured pages of the next WHM eagerly, It is a veritable delight for my bloodied eyes – long may it traverse the warp.

— Nodrog-Nai, Lord General, the Blood Gatherers of Karond-Kar

☠ M–m–m–my lord It is I, your most humble servant I heard your gracious call and I– Hold on a moment! I thought you said "Khorne" back there! But you're nothing but a Dark Elf! A–ha–hah–hah–ha–haaaa! You great pointy headed fool! And to think I almost fell for your ruse.

As it happens, I have personally arranged for the return of that scheming little vixen, Ephrael Stern and her Deamonic Fork thing, and also produced your desired miniature representation of her and that damnable Inquisitor Now I suppose you are going to think it's all your doing! Well, it's not. but have the very last Black Library shirt of clothing anyway and be off with you!

• Hail Brother Baneblade,

It is I, Brother-Captain Danielius, I bring greetings from the mighty Emperor and his all mighty fury in the form of his loyal Ultramarines, 2nd company. After having defeated a Dark Eldar War host, I indulged myself in the latest of Warhammer Monthly, in this case issue 27. Usually I do not respond in letters but after having seen Ben Mayer's ideas on movies, I couldn't resist the urge to put forward my ideas too!

I had also been pondering who would be fit for roles as characters in WHM and I have to say that Ben sets the scene most vividly and his choice of actors is superb! Although if he were still alive I think Freddie Mercury himself would fit the bill better as Hekate. Truly WHM has improved immeasurably since it first came out, not that it was ever bad but in itself it has become the best comic I have EVER seen.

One last thing, Baneblade, decapitate that snivelling hound that dares to feel the might the Imperium!

Fail me not, fail not the Emperor!

— Danielius Marshall, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire

☠ Oops Guess he failed to decapitate thus what was it you said, thus "snivelling hound" Ha! The only hound you'll encounter will be one of Lord Khorne's most foul Flesh Hounds! Then we'll see who does the snivelling!

Every month we'll be giving away a box full of Games Workshop goodies, this month we've a priceless Imperial Guard Battle Force box up for grabs. You can send your transmissions to:

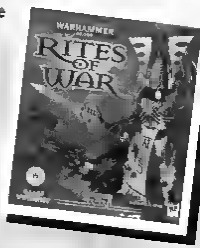
Warhammer Monthly
The Black Library
Games Workshop Ltd
Willow Rd
Nottingham
NG7 2WS • UK

or via a flying disc of Tzeentch to:

publishing@games-workshop.co.uk

CHAOS CHRISTMAS COMPO: THE WINNERS

Here at the Black Library bunker we're still reeling from the barrage of replies to the Chaos Christmas Competition. Amongst the scores of nightmare visions we received, dozens of you thought that in "The grim darkness of the far future there is only a distinct lack of light-bulbs" and an equal amount who believed that there would be "even more war". Other folk were more creative than that, so winning a towering stack of goodies including a boxed Warhammer 40,000 game, the stunning Rites of War computer game, a Falcon grav-tank and an Imperial Leman Russ tank (blimey!) are:



Frank Vob, Kritzkow Germany • Luis Jacobo, San Diego, USA • Matthew Alazia, Southampton • J Vogel, Florida USA • Andre Carr, Blakeney • Hector Murphy, Dubai, UAE • Baldie, Sheffield • Jonathan Martin, Mossley • Alex Gordevich, Sydney NSW • Stuart Pring, Solihul • Clive Weldon, Kingston • A.D. Lanceley, Caernarfon, Wales • Dopplereffect (!?), Beaverton, USA • Glenn Ng, Alhambra, USA • Christian Vetter, Mannheim, Germany

Another 40 lucky readers win runners-up prizes from the mighty Bulldog Buckle range of Warhammer 40,000 belt buckles, badges, dog tags and pendants. Congratulations all!

TITAN
VIVAPORIUS
SCRIPT DAN ABNETT
PENCILS ANTHONY WILLIAMS
INKS ANDY LANNING
LETTERS FIONA STEPHENSON
PART SEVEN
AT THE FRONT LINE OF THE WAR WORLD VIVAPORIUS...
INCOMING ENCRYPTED SIGNAL, PRINCEPS
ON MY MONITOR, NALLEN.
DECODE, AUTHORITY HEKATE.
WHAT IN THE NAME OF THE EMPEROR...
GLEEP!
COMMAND ORDERS... TO IMPERIUS DICTATIO AND STRIKE UNIT... ABORT MISSION AND REROUTE TO GRID REF K345/678, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATE... BELOVED BE THE EMPEROR AND THE GOD MACHINE!
THEY REROUTE ME! THEY ASK ME TO ABORT MY MISSION!
WHY!?
IT'S BEEN JUST TWO DAYS SINCE A BROTHER WARLORD WAS TAKEN ALIVE BY THE FOE! EVERY OUNCE OF OUR EFFORT SINCE THEN HAS BEEN TO ASSEMBLE THIS RESCUE FORCE!
AND NOW... WE ARE TO ABANDON BEFORE WE HAVE EVEN BEGUN?

WE SWING EAST.
IT DOESN'T FEEL *RIGHT* TO BE ABORTING, PRINCEPS
AGREED, MODERATI VOSS, BUT THERE MUST BE A GOOD REASON...
MY ANGER BOILS, AND THE TITAN'S TURBINES ROAR IN EMPATHY
BUT I AM A PRINCEPS OF THE ADEPTUS MECHANICUS, AND I FOLLOW ORDERS
TACTICAL APPRAISAL, NALLEN?
ASSESSING NOW, PRINCEPS.
THERE'S A LOT OF ACTIVITY AT THE DESIGNATED SITE. AN IMPERIAL COLUMN IN TROUBLE. I'M REGISTERING WEAPONSFIRE. LOOKS LIKE A *COUNTER ATTACK*, BUT...
BUT?
THE PATTERNS *AREN'T* TYRANIC, PRINCEPS! IT'S SOMEONE *ELSE*, COMING ACROSS THE COLUMN'S EASTERN FLANK!
THEN WHO? WHAT?
WE CLEAR THE HILL LINE...

AND WE SEE

ELDAR! THE ELDAR!
IT DEFIES IMAGINATION! ATTACKED BY A SECOND FOE ON A SECOND FRONT!
CHARGE MAIN WEAPONS BANKS! ORDER THE STRIKE FORCE FORWARD!
ENGAGE AUTO-LOADERS! PRESENT AND FIRE!
FORWARD, AYE!
JETBIKE COMING IN! GOLDEN THRONE OF EARTH! PRINCEPS!
OUR LEFT SIDE'S EXPOSED! PRINCEPS!
PANIC DOESN'T SUIT YOU, MODERATI
HOOOOM!

I REPEAT THE MANTRA OVER AND AGAIN...
" SELECT TARGET... RANGE... EXECUTE "
THE TITAN SHAKES AS WE DISCHARGE ENERGISED DEATH.
THE EARTH SHAKES.
(SELECT TARGET... RANGE... EXECUTE)
WE ADVANCE. RELENTLESS NO TIME TO WONDER.
(SELECT TARGET... RANGE... EXECUTE)
THEY ARE NUMEROUS AND VICIOUSLY FAST.
(SELECT TARGET... RANGE... EXECUTE)
EVERY SHOT MUST COUNT OR THEIR SPEED WILL OVERWHELM US
(SELECT TARGET... RANGE... EXECUTE)
(SELEET TARGET... RANGE .. EXECUTE)
(SELEET TARGET... RANGE .. EXECUTE)
(SELEET TARGET... RANGE... EXECUTE)

THEN, IN THE MIDST OF IT ALL, THE GHOST OF MY PREDECESSOR MACABEE HISSES OUT OF THE HAUNTED DEPTHS OF THE TITAN'S MIND IMPULSE LINK...
THIS IS WRONG, HEKATE...
WRONG? WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
THE ELDAR ARE AN IMPLACABLE FOE... I KNOW, DICTATIO'S FACED THEM BEFORE...
BUT I KNOW THEM ALSO TO BE NOBLE, CULTURED, WISE DICTATIO HAS FOUGHT WITH THEM TOO
THEY WOULD NOT SIDE WITH A FOE AS UNHOLY AS THE TYRANIDS THERE IS SOMETHING GRAVELY WRONG IN THIS
I SHAKE THE OLD GHOST OUT OF MY HEAD...
NALLEN! PREPARE A WIDE RANGE TRANSMISSION! TRY AND OPEN A COMMUNICATION LINK WITH THEM!
WHAT? I MEAN... AYE, PRINCEPS!
SIGNAL SENT, PRINCEPS.
SIR! AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT! AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT!
FROM WHO, NALLEN?

" FROM THEM PRINCES "
I AM FARENDIS, IN YOUR TONGUE: " HARBINGER OF DOOM "
DO YOU WISH TO PARLEY?
NEXT: FRIEND OR FOE?

Mordheim — City of the Damned

Script – Gordon Rennie
Art – Mike Perkins
Letters – Dave Stephenson

3: AMBUSH!

MORDHEIM, WHERE DEATH AND GLORY AWAIT IN EQUAL MEASURE, AND WHERE WARBANDS OF INTREPID WYRDSTONE HUNTERS SOON FIND EITHER ONE OR THE OTHER IN THE RUINS-
SKA-BLATCH!
RANALD'S TEETH--!
YOU WERE RIGHT, ULLI. HE IS STILL THERE, AFTER ALL. THAT'S TWENTY CROWNS I OWE YOU.
DAMNED RAT THINGS! THEY MUST BE SITTING ON A RICH WYRDSTONE LODE IF THEY'RE GOING TO THIS MUCH TROUBLE TO PROTECT IT!
R-R-RAT THINGS?
THERE'S ONE OF THEM OUT THERE SHOOTING AT US AND WHILE HE'S GOT US PINNED DOWN A COUPLE OF HIS LITTLE RATTY FRIENDS ARE PROBABLY SNEAKING UP ON US FROM BEHIND!
S-SO WHAT DO WE DO..?
THE SKAVEN
YOU WON'T HAVE HEARD OF THEM IF YOU MEET THE SKAVEN AND LIVE TO REMEMBER IT, THEN YOU'RE EITHER VERY SMART OR VERY LUCKY, AND YOU DON'T LOOK TO BE EITHER OF THOSE TWO THINGS TO ME!
WE RUSH HIM. HE'LL HAVE THREE TARGETS INSTEAD OF ONE, AND IF WE MOVE FAST ENOUGH AND KEEP DODGING HE MIGHT NOT GET ANY OF US!

ALRIGHT EVERYONE READY? WE GO ON THE COUNT OF THREE--
ONE--
TWO--
THREE
BLAM!
HEH HEH WORKS EVERY TIME, THAT OLD TRICK
AND NOW WE GO WHILE HE'S RELOADING!
I'LL DEAL WITH THE VERMIN IN THE TOWER, YOU SEE TO HIS FRIENDS!
ULLI KNOWS IT'S GOING TO BE CLOSE, BUT AS HE RACES TOWARDS THE SKAVEN'S POSITION HE HEARS IT GIVE A SHRILL SHRIEK OF WARNING--
NEEEEK!
--THE RESPONCE COMING IMMEDIATELY FROM HIS TWO CLAN-KIN HIDING NEARBY BUT THE SKAVEN AREN'T THE ONLY DEADLY VERMIN INFESTING THE RUINS OF MORDHEIM--

THERE'S ALSO MARGUAND VOLKER, THE MARIENBURG WHARF-RAT WHO TOOK HIS FIRST LIFE BEFORE THE AGE OF TEN!
ULLI SEES THE SKAVEN WEAPON'S MUZZLE POINTING DOWN TOWARDS HIM. HE KNOWS HE ISN'T GOING TO REACH THE TOWER IN TIME.
BUT REACHING THE TOWER IN TIME WAS NEVER PART OF THE PLAN!
NAAAAAGH!
BOSH!
AS WITH THE REST OF MORDHEIM'S STANDING RUINS, IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO FINISH THE JOB STARTED BY THE IMPACT OF THE COMET CALLED THE HAMMER OF SIGMAR!
KRA-ASH!
NICE WORK, ULLI. TOO BAD ABOUT OUR COMRADES, THOUGH.
INDEED. IT'LL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE WE FIND IDIOTS AS NAIVE AND TRUSTING AS THEM AGAIN.
THE END

STRATEGIUM

A Tale of the Iron Snakes

A TALE OF THE IRON SNAKES
I SPEAK AGAIN OF PETROK, WHO YOU KNOW AS GREAT PETROK FOR HIS MANIFOLD VICTORIES HAVE MADE HIM A HERO OF OUR CHAPTER
BUT EVEN HEROES BEGIN SOMEWHERE IT IS OFTEN WHAT THEY LEARN FROM THEIR MISTAKES EARLY IN LIFE THAT MAKES THEM HEROES LATER
SO WITH PETROK, AS A YOUNG LEXICANIUM HE SHOWED EXTRAORDINARY GIFTS AS A BATTLE LEADER
BUT SOMETIMES, HE TRUSTED HIS INSTINCTS TOO MUCH
SO IT WAS ON KAPALIA DURING THE LATEST INCURSION OF THE ELDAR RENEGADES

Script Dan Abnett

Art Paul Jeacock

Letters Fiona Stephenson

AND SO IT WAS AT THE CHAPTER HOUSE ON KARIBDYS WHERE I GAVE HIM INSTRUCTION
YOUR EMPEROR PIECE IS FLANKED AND CORNERED IN THE OUTER CIRCLE MY AUXILIARIES CONFOUND YOUR CHARGERS
YOU MUST CONCEDE
INDEED
I HAD NEVER KNOWN A TRAINEE MASTER THE INTRICATE MECHANICS OF STRATEGIUM SO SWIFTLY
BUT I SAID LITTLE FRAISE BREEDS ARROGANCE
AGAIN, YOU ARE DEFEATED, MASTER LIBRARIAN!
LET US RESET THE PIECES AND PLAY AGAIN, USING THE TRI FORM ASSAIL OPENING THIS TIME
LEXICANIUM - YOU PREDICTED I WOULD FEINT TO THE LEFT WITH MY CHARGERS IN THE LAST GAME
HOW?
IT WAS AN OBVIOUS STRATEGY YOU HAVE TAUGHT ME TO ANTICIPATE. I FELT IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.
IT WASN'T OBVIOUS AT ALL. IN FACT, IT WAS A RECKLESS PLOY ON MY PART TO WRONG-FOOT HIM.
HE TOLD ME HE FELT IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. THEREIN, I BELIEVED, WAS HIS WEAKNESS.
BEGIN PLAY.

ON KAPALIA, THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT WERE AS PRECISE AS ANY GAME OF STRATEGIUM BACK IN THE CHAPTER HOUSE
TWO COLUMNS OF IRON SNAKES, ONE LED BY PETROK AND THE OTHER UNDER MY OWN COMMAND, WERE TO ADVANCE AND EXECUTE A PINCER ATTACK ON THE RENEGADE ELDAR POSITIONS
I HAD PLANNED THE STRATEGY CAREFULLY, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT TERRAIN AND SPEED OF MOVEMENT
OUR PINCER WAS TO CLOSE WITH PERFECT TIMING TO MAXIMISE THE VICTORY
BUT PETROK USED HIS PSYCHIC GIFTS AND SAW A SHORT-CUT HIS MEN COULD FOLLOW THAT WOULD BRING HIS COLUMN DOWN ONTO THE ELDAR FASTER AND MORE EFFICIENTLY THAN I HAD INTENDED
FOLLOWING HIS INSPIRED LEAD, THEY MET THE ENEMY WITH GREAT FURY

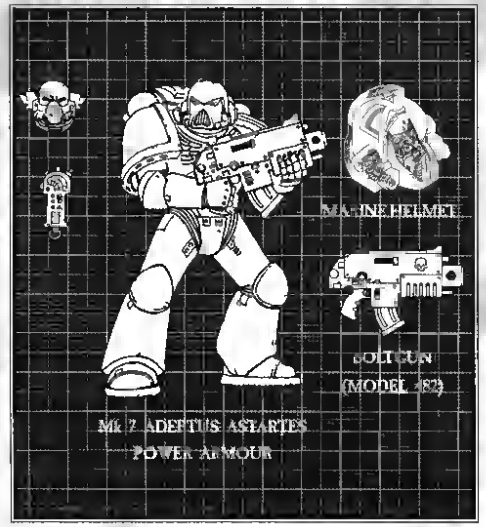
" STORY CONTINUES AFTER MIDDLE PAGES "

IRON SNAKES
SPACE MARINES

Space Marines are mankind's greatest warriors. Recruited only from the inhabitants of the galaxy's most inhospitable planets. Genetically enhanced to turn each Space Marine into an 8-foot tall superhuman killing machine, far stronger, faster and hardier than any normal man.

Space Marines are organised into Chapters, made up of 1000 battle-brothers. Each Chapter is wholly independant of the others, with its own beliefs, traditions and preferred battle tactics. The mighty Iron Snakes are just one such Chapter.

Unswerving in their dedication to the Emperor, Imperial Space Marines are the first troops sent into the fray.

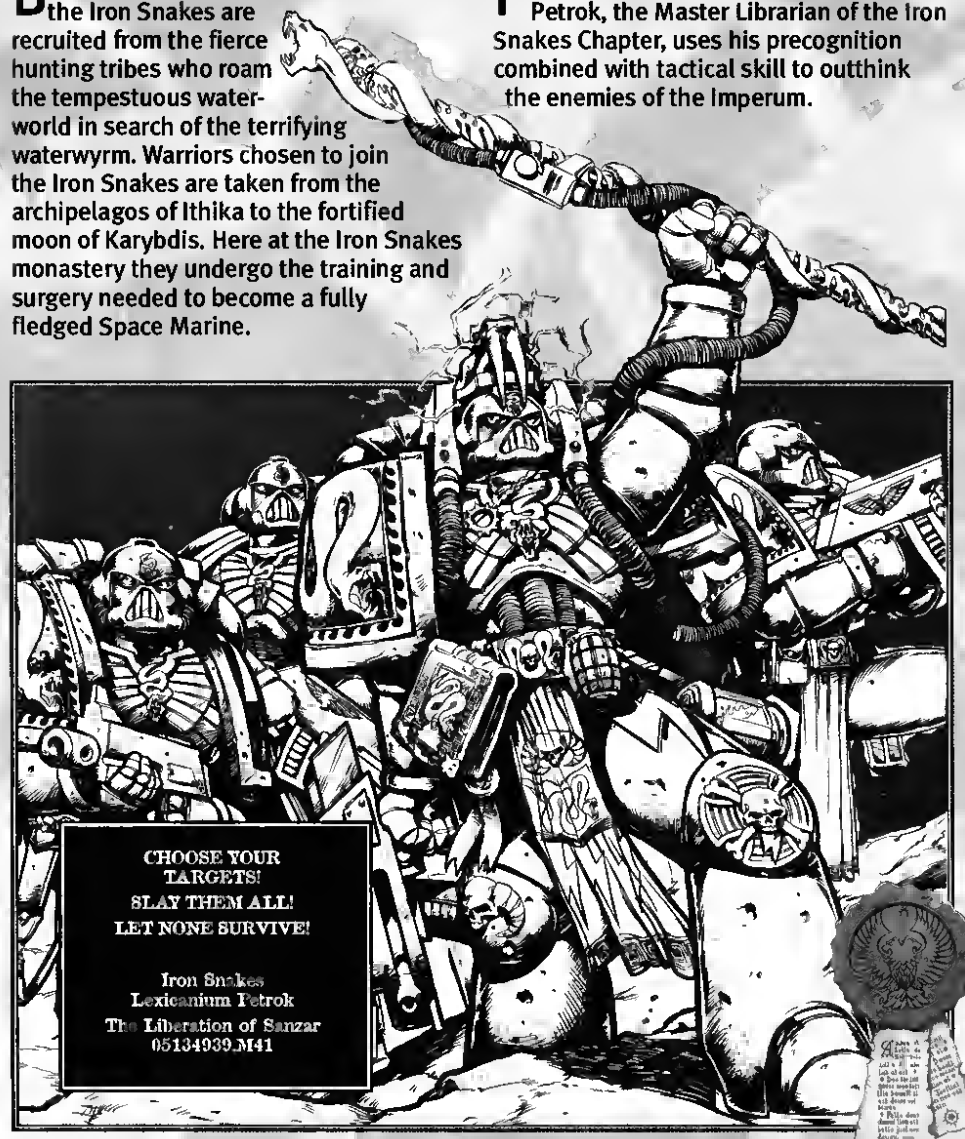


Each Space Marine is protected by an ancient suit of power armour, composed of ceramite plates, power armour is fully sealed to provide protection against gas weapons and harsh atmospheres as well as amplifying the users strengh with electrically motivated fibre bundles, providing numerous auxillary systems such as communicators and auto -senses.

The chosen weapon of the Space Marines is the Bolt Gun or Bolter. Firing self-propelled armour-piercing mass-reactive explosive missiles called 'bolts', the bolter is capable of quite literally tearing a target apart.

Born of Ithika, a world of raging seas, the Iron Snakes are recruited from the fierce hunting tribes who roam the tempestuous water-world in search of the terrifying waterwyrm. Warriors chosen to join the Iron Snakes are taken from the archipelagos of Ithika to the fortified moon of Karybdis. Here at the Iron Snakes monastery they undergo the training and surgery needed to become a fully fledged Space Marine.

Possesing powerful Psychic powers, Petrok, the Master Librarian of the Iron Snakes Chapter, uses his precognition combined with tactical skill to outthink the enemies of the Imperum.



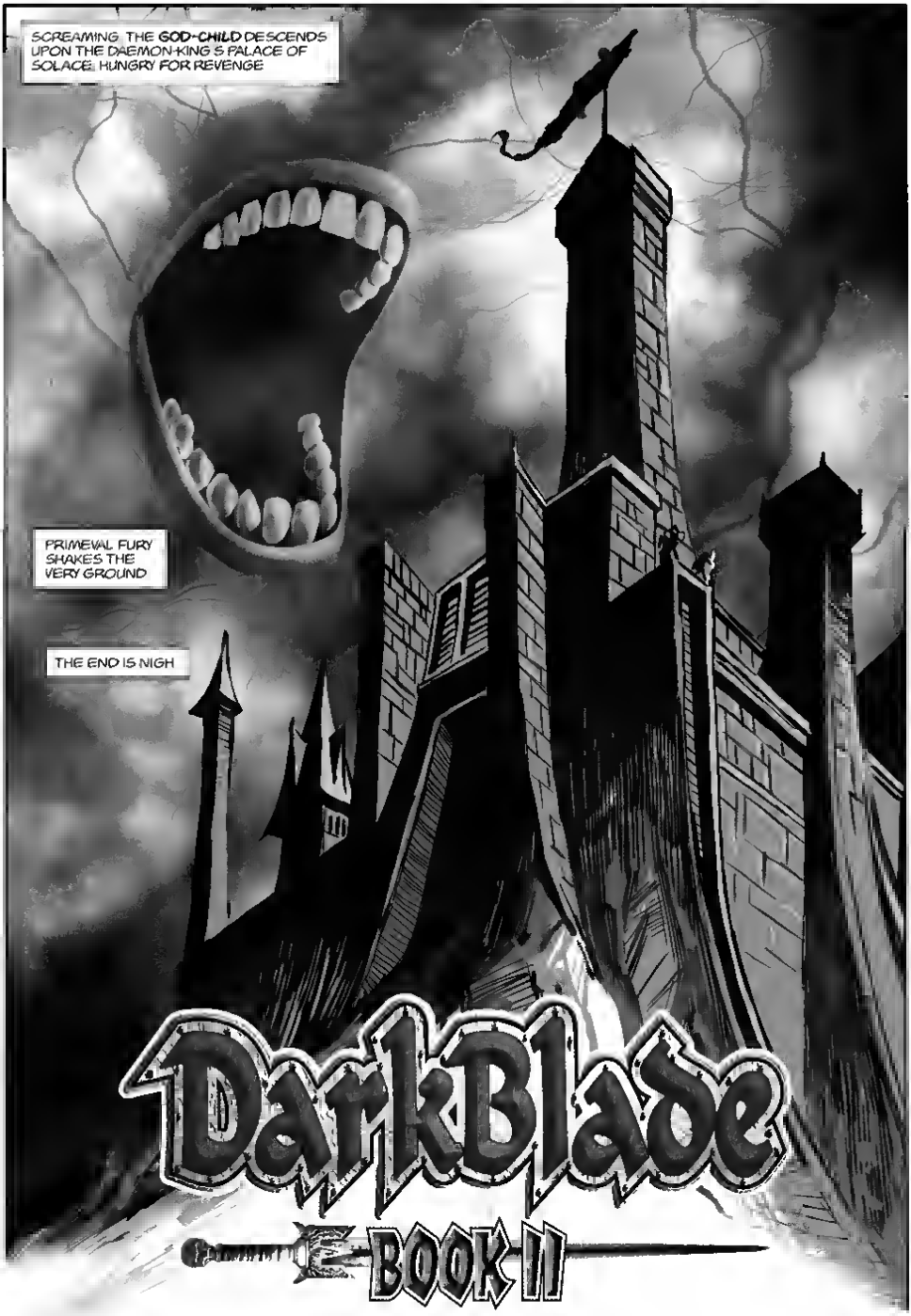
MY VANGUARD ENTERS THE SECOND HELIX OF YOUR DEFENCE...
THERE ARE ONLY THREE VIABLE RESPONSES YOU CAN MAKE, AND ALL OF THEM MERELY PROLONG THE INEVITABLE.
WILL YOU CAPITULATE NOW?
HMM...
THIS IS MOST INTERESTING. HOW COULD YOU HAVE KNOWN THE STRENGTHS I KEPT HIDDEN IN THE THIRD CIRCLE? THE PIECES WERE BLIND TO YOU.
YOUR VICTORY DEPENDED UPON THEM NOT BEING PRIMARY CHARGERS
I DIDN'T THINK STRATEGICALLY, THAT--
HA! YOU DIDN'T THINK STRATEGICALLY AT ALL!
YOU ARE PLAYING TO YOUR INSTINCTS! YOU ARE IGNORING ALL TACTICAL INFORMATION AND RELYING ON YOUR PSYCHIC INSIGHT TO ASSESS THE COMBAT!
AND I WIN - AND WIN AGAIN! IS THAT SO WRONG?
A LIBRARIAN'S VISION IS HIS GREATEST GIFT, PETROK, AND YOURS IS GREATER THAN MOST I HAVE SEEN.
BUT IT CANNOT ALWAYS BE TRUSTED WITHOUT ADHERENCE TO STRATEGY. EVEN THE GREATEST INSTINCTIVE COMMANDER MAY FAIL.
BUT I UNDERSTAND STRATEGY! I OBSERVE TACTICS!
PROVE IT
WE WILL PLAY
BUT THIS TIME YOU WILL WEAR THE PSYCHIC DAMPER. IT WILL BLIND YOUR INNER INSTINCT. YOU WILL PLAY BY TACTICAL SKILL ALONE

PETROKS COLUMN MET THE MASSED FORCES OF THE ELDAR WITHOUT THE TACTICAL SUPPORT OF MY ARM OF THE PINCER
INSTEAD OF BREAKING THEM BETWEEN US HE FOUND HIMSELF FACING THEIR ENTIRE MIGHT WHICH FOCUSSED ON HIM AND HIS MEN WITH SINGULAR FURY
WITHIN FIVE MINUTES OF ENGAGING THEM HE WAS BEING DRIVEN BACK INTO THE TREE COVER, FIGHTING FOR HIS LIFE
HE HAD TRUSTED HIS PSYCHIC INSTINCT SUBTLE AND INSIDIOUS LURES BROADCAST FROM THE MINDS OF THE ELDAR HAD DECEIVED HIM AS TO THE EASE OF THE ATTACK
HE HAD IGNORED TACTICS HE WOULD PAY WITH HIS LIFE AND THE LIVES OF ALL HIS MEN

PETROK? YOUR MOVE
YOU COMMIT YOUR CHARGERS TO THE CENTRE RING? INTERESTING
I... WILL *NOT* MAKE THAT MOVE A MOMENT, PLEASE
YOU HAVE THE LEFT HELIX ENCIRCLED, AND YOUR PIECES ON THE FLANK ARE BLIND
SO MAKE YOUR MOVE! THIS IS *WAR* LEXICANIUM PETROK!
YOU MUST LOOK AND READ AND MAKE YOUR MOVE *WITHOUT* DELAY!
MY AUXILIARIES INTO THE SECOND CIRCLE AS A COUNTER FEINT!
THERE! YOU HAVE NOWHERE LEFT TO RUN!

AS SOON AS THE VOX-OFFICER INFORMED ME OF PETROK'S DIRE SITUATION, I MOVED MY COLUMN FORWARD AT DOUBLE-TIME AND ENGAGED THE ELDAR RENEGADES FROM BEHIND
THEY DIED IN THEIR HUNDREDS, KEENING OUT THE NAME OF THEIR BLACK GOD, PINNED BETWEEN OUR IRON SNAKE FORCES AS I HAD INTENDED
THE DAY WAS WON. KAPALIA WAS WON
BUT AS WE BURNED THE ELDAR CORPSES AND MADE THE SKY BLACK WITH THEIR ASH, PETROK CAME TO ME AND ASKED ME FOR FORGIVENESS
I GAVE IT, FREELY. I KNEW WHAT HE WAS CAPABLE OF. I KNEW WHAT KIND OF HERO HE WOULD BECOME, IN TIME

YOU HAVE TOPPLED MY FLANK PIECES. THE LEFT CIRCLE IS OPEN TO YOU
ANOTHER VICTORY FOR LEXICANIUM PETROK
OR PERHAPS NOT...
MY BLIND PIECES ON THE FLANK ARE CHARGERS YOUR EMPEROR PIECE IS ROUTED
I... I...
YOU WILL LEARN YOU MADE A TACTICAL ERROR. UNDERSTAND IT, AND BUILD UPON IT
DON'T MAKE IT AGAIN
DO YOU REMEMBER KAPALIA?
O OF COURSE LIBRARIAN
SOMETIMES I WONDER IF YOU DO TACTICS BEFORE INSTINCT STRATEGY BEFORE INSIGHT
REMEMBER THAT AND YOU WILL BE THE GREATEST OF US, PETROK. FORGET IT AND YOU WILL BE NOTHING
HISTORY ENLIGHTENS US PETROK DID NOT FORGET FOR THAT ALONE I CAN CONSIDER MY LIFE PURPOSEFUL
FROM THE RECOLLECTIONS OF NECTOR, CHIEF LIBRARIAN, IRON SNAKES KARIBDYS 456 M41
THE END


SCREAMING THE GOD-CHILD DESCENDS UPON THE DAEMON-KING'S PALACE OF SOLACE, HUNGRY FOR REVENGE
PRIMEVAL FURY SHAKES THE VERY GROUND
THE END IS NIGH
DarkBlade
BOOK II

Part Twelve- Annihilation.

Script: Dan Abnett Art: Kev Hopgood

TZ'ARKAN'S BEAST-LEGIONS, GUARDING THE HIGH WALLS OF SOLACE, LOOK ON IN DISMAY
THEIR FEEBLE BRUTE MINDS REGISTER NOTHING BUT TERROR.
THEN THE SCREAMING ASSAULTS THEM, MINDS FRY BRAINS RUPTURE
SOME TRY TO FLEE.
THERE IS NOWHERE TO FLEE TO

CURSE OF BLOOD! HOW CAN THIS BE?
I ESCAPED HIS REALM FAIR AND SQUARE!
GOD-CHILD IS INSANE, MALUS! THERE IS NO REASON OR FAIRNESS TO HIS ACTIONS!
HE IS A CHILD-THING...SPITEFUL, PETTY, CRUEL...
YOU'VE MADE A FAR MORE DEADLY ENEMY THAN ME ON YOUR VOYAGES, DRUCHII!!
YOU'RE A DAEMON-KING! HELP ME FIGHT HIM OR WE'LL BOTH DIE!
HELP YOU? HA HA HA HA!
THANKS TO YOU, WE'RE ALREADY DEAD!
DAMN YOU, THEN! TREACHEROUS TO THE LAST!
SARCHH!
THERE MUST BE SOMETHING
I-LOOK AND LEARN, M-MALUS DARKBLADE!!
WHAT C-CAN WE DO AGAINST THAT?

THE STORM FRONT HITS THE OUTER WALLS, AND STONE MELTS LIKE ICE
A SCREAMING FORCE DEMOLISHES THE WALLS BLASTING A RAIN OF ROCK SHRAPNEL BACK INSIDE.
AND THE GOD-CHILD APPEARS

HOW DID HE ESCAPE? OH, BLOODY HANDS OF KHAINE! HOW!?
OTHERNESSE WAS HIS PRISON! HE WAS BOUND THERE!
THEN YOU'LL SEE HIM FREE .. BROKE THE ENCHANTMENTS THAT HELD HIM THERE BY ESCAPING...

...THIS IS YOUR DOING, MALUS .. YOU LET HIM SHIT AND GET HIM ANGRY...
NO! NO, I'VE COME SO FAR!

...ONLY TO DIE.

THEN LET THIS BE A GOOD DEATH.
HAVE MY SOUL AGAIN IN DEATH I HAVE MY VICTORY.

COME ON, GOD-CHILD! I AM READY! DO YOUR WORST!
OH, HE WILL.
...YOU KNOW, MAZUS, WHAT I ALWAYS REALLY LIKED ABOUT YOU...
YOU'RE TOO STUBBORN AND STUPID TO KNOW WHEN YOU'VE LOST.
SHUT UP, DAEMON!

MALUS?
MALUS?

uhn...?
alive, but...?
YES, MALUS. YOU'RE ALIVE.

THAT VOICE! WHO SPEAKS? IS IT YOU, TZ'ARKAN?
NONE OTHER.
THE GOD-CHILD LET YOU LIVE, MALUS. I TOLD YOU HE WAS A SPITEFUL MONSTER.

WHERE ARE YOU? SHOW YOURSELF!
HE FOUND A WAY TO PUNISH YOU FOR YOUR TRICKERY...
...AND TO PUNISH ME FOR EVER SETTING YOU ON THE QUEST THAT LED YOU TO HIS DOOR.

WHERE ARE YOU, DAMN IT!?
THE LAST PLACE EITHER OF US WANT ME TO BE, DARKBLADE...

...I'M INSIDE YOU.
YOU HAVE YOUR SOUL BACK, MALUS...
...AND TZ'ARKAN TOO!
NOOOOOO!
HEAR NOW THE VENGEANCE SCREAM OF MALUS DARKBLADE AS IT RINGS OUT ACROSS THE CRAGS OF FIRE AND ICE
...FOR ALL ETERNITY.
END OF BOOK TWO